

To: Distribution

From: Bob Hunnicutt, Tower Coordinator, Columbia  
Telecommunications

A meeting of the Telecommunications Transmission Facility  
Coordinating Group (TTFCG) was held on October 3, 2001. The  
following people were in attendance:

MEMBERS

Jane Lawton OCA (240) 777-3724 (FAX) 777-3770  
Michael Ma M-NCPPC (301) 495-4595 (FAX) 495-1306  
Willem Van Aller DIST (240) 777-2994  
Eric Carzon OMB (240) 777-2763

STAFF

Robert Hunnicutt CTC (410) 964-5700 (FAX) 964-6478  
Amy Rowan OCA (240) 777-3684 (FAX) 777-3770

OTHER ATTENDEES

Lee Jarmon Nextel (410) 953-7440 (FAX) 953-7406  
Tom King Etchison resident  
Jane King Etchison resident  
Mark Nelligan Etchison resident (301) 948-0020  
Jaymie Hanna American Tower (410) 729-5821  
Emily Nelms Bechtel (240) 447-9444  
Ed Donohue Cole, Raywid/AT&T (202) 659-9750  
Martin Klauber OPC  
Patrick Welsh American Tower (410) 729-5821  
John Wilkes Etchison resident  
Jane Wilkes Etchison resident  
John Copley Etchison resident  
Diane Copley Etchison resident  
Terry Geldermann Etchison resident  
Jane Waldron Etchison resident  
Thomas Waldron Etchison resident

Action Item: AT&T Wireless application to construct a new 134'  
monopole on the Barnhart property located at Hawkins Creamery Road  
and Laytonsville Road in Gaithersburg (Application #200105-01).

Bob Hunnicutt reviewed the status of this application and the purpose  
for today's meeting. He explained that at the last meeting, the  
application had been reviewed with the TTFCG members. During the  
meeting, the group and an Etchison resident wanted to review AT&T's  
confidential RF propagation maps in order to see the alternatives which  
had been identified by the Tower Coordinator, researched by AT&T and  
discussed during the meeting. He explained the room was cleared to  
allow only parties relevant to the particular application to review these  
materials with the AT&T engineer.

Mr. Hunnicutt explained that today's meeting was to specifically discuss  
two alternatives that the TTFCG had asked about at the prior meeting.  
Those alternatives were to place the monopole in a different location on

the property and determine if there were any adverse effects from the move that would impact the service coverage. He noted that the TTFCG had requested that AT&T consider moving the monopole further into the wooded area to better conceal the structure.

Ms. Lawton recognized Ed Donohue and asked him to provide the members with an update on AT&T's progress in considering the TTFCG's request.

Mr. Donohue displayed a revised site plan and stated that the site acquisition and construction staff at AT&T had advised him that the monopole could be moved to a natural clearing in the wooded area, approximately 50' from its present location. He stated that a move of that short distance did not effect the RF or coverage aspects of the monopole, and that AT&T had agreed to locate the monopole at that new location on the property, as the TTFCG had requested. Mr. Donohue noted that these new plans had not yet been filed with the Board of Appeals, but the new location would still meet the setback requirements. He stated that AT&T conducted a balloon test at the site.

Mr. Nelligan asked if the monopole was still visible from any direction. Mr. Donohue stated that it was better concealed from some directions than others were, but the most improved view was the view of the site from Laytonsville Road driving north.

Jane Lawton asked if this relocation was still out of the airpark flight path. Mr. Donohue stated that it was, and noted that AT&T had reduced the monopole height to 134', the FAA approved limit. Ms. Lawton commented that she still believed this siting was a good candidate for a tree monopole.

John Copley, another Etchison resident, noted that the selection of photos did not best illustrate all of the views the community would have of the new monopole. He noted that there should be a photo of the balloon test from Hipsley Mill Road, which would have the most visible view of the structure.

Jane Lawton noted that she was pleased that so many residents of the community were in attendance at the meeting, but that the appropriate place for public comment would be at the Park and Planning Commission and Board of Appeals hearings. She explained that the TTFCG had completed its engineering review and that the remaining issues were related to the placement of the monopole on the property.

Mr. Copley asked what the Park and Planning Commission would review during its hearing. Ms. Lawton explained that under State law, the Park and Planning Commission reviews the land use issues related to the monopole or tower siting. She stated they determine that the land use is compatible with the zoning and they look at the Special Exception requirements.

Michal Ma added that the difference between the Park and Planning Commission review and the Board of Appeals review is that the Planning Commission conducts its hearing and makes a recommendation to the Board of Appeals, and the Board of Appeals then has the final authority over granting a Special Exception.

Martin Klauber added that the TTFCG review is not based on the zoning ordinance. He stated that at the Park and Planning Commission there is a timed public hearing where individuals and other interested parties are given a specific amount of time to make comment on the application. He added that the Board of Appeals conducts a full hearing, where speakers are not limited by time, and there is an opportunity for a thorough discussion of each application. He stated that after the hearing, the Board of Appeals writes a written opinion for the case. Ms. Lawton commented that the TTFCG reviews some zoning issues such as the setback requirements and whether telecommunications facilities are permitted and, if so, under what conditions.

Michael Ma stated that at the last meeting, Bob Hunnicutt had explained what the Tower Coordinator had reviewed as alternative sites, and asked Mr. Hunnicutt to explain the process conducted for this application.

Mr. Hunnicutt stated that when the Tower Coordinator conducts a review, they perform a physical site visit where they survey the area to determine if there are any existing tall structures, such as a building, water tank, or electric transmission line towers which could accommodate the antennas in lieu of constructing a new monopole or tower. He stated that the Tower Coordinator also surveys the database which lists the locations of existing carrier antenna facilities. He stated from these surveys, they can determine if there are any alternatives which may be used by the carrier. When alternative sites are located, such as in this case, the carrier is asked to provide additional RF propagation maps showing the expected coverage if those existing structures were used to attach antennas.

He noted that when this application was submitted by AT&T, they had also submitted an application for a taller monopole at the Stanley property located on Long Corner Road to the north of the Barnhart property. In the review, the Tower Coordinator looked at both of these sites together for alternative configurations of antennas which could be deployed to use existing structures and still provide adequate coverage without the need for construction of new monopoles. For the Barnhart property, however, use of the nearby PEPCO transmission lines towers would not provide the coverage desired by AT&T, as it would leave gaps in coverage in certain portions of the service area.

Ed Donohue added that the request for a monopole at the Stanley property had been put on hold pending discussions with PEPCO to potentially site antennas on PEPCO facilities in lieu of a new monopole. He added that when PEPCO determines the height it can provide for the antennas and addresses the structural issues, AT&T could decide whether they needed to pursue the Stanley monopole. He noted that if PEPCO facilities could be used, they would be, and a request for a second monopole at the Stanley property would be withdrawn.

Many of the residents in attendance examined the photo simulations, the photos of the balloon test, and the site plan. Jane Lawton noted that AT&T had a map which indicated which photos were taken from which property location, and that there was a color-coded reference map to indicate where the photos were taken from to see whether the monopole would be visible or not. Mr. Nelligan noted that during the

winter there would not be as many leaves on the trees so the monopole might be more visible from some of these areas. He added that since he was the only community representative at the last TTFCG meeting, AT&T may wish to review the RF propagation maps for the residents at today's meeting.

Mr. Donohue stated that he had no objection to this request, and that Mr. Hunnicutt had the RF maps, but noted that since neither he nor the Tower Coordinator expected RF issues to be revisited today, neither of them had engineers to discuss the RF issues at the meeting today.

Mr. Hunnicutt displayed RF propagation maps for the attendees to review.

Ms. Lawton cautioned the group that they were viewing confidential information which could not be divulged to others.

Mr. Van Aller noted that the maps are a theoretical depiction of what the service coverage would be based on a computer generated model.

Mr. Copley noted that on Map #5, the Barnhart property is not depicted in the correct location, but is shown farther south on Laytonsville Road than where the actual site is.

Mr. Nelligan commented that it appeared from the RF maps that if the Stanley property and the Barnhart property sites were removed from the maps, the only place where there would be coverage would be near Damascus and Laytonsville. He added that at the last meeting, he was not aware that many of the Etchison residents have AT&T service, and that they report that the cellular service is fine and they do not experience dropped calls as they drive towards Damascus. Mr. Hunnicutt stated that he also has AT&T service, and when he was driving around the service area from a number of locations, he did experience difficulty and dropped calls when calling his office in Columbia. Mr. Van Aller commented that this anecdotal information is not especially valid, and that the carriers determine the level of coverage they need to adequately service their customers and that the RF maps are simply a statistical representation of what the expected coverage might attain.

Mr. Nelligan stated that from the RF maps, it appeared that use of a PEPCO transmission line tower and a shorter new monopole located between Etchison and Laytonsville, but farther to the south of the present location, would probably provide the coverage that AT&T needed. He added that he believed the pilots at the Davis airport would be requesting that the monopole have lights, and if that was the case, the County would require AT&T to light the monopole. Mr. Van Aller explained the FAA requirements for lighting a structure. Mr. Donohue stated that neither the FAA nor the MAA required lights on this monopole. Jane Lawton noted that this is an issue to be resolved by the Park and Planning Commission and the Board of Appeals and should be addressed at that time.

Mr. Nelligan stated he believed there was more work to be done in investigating his suggestion for alternative locations for a new monopole. Mr. Copley noted that his examination of the revised site

plan appears to show the new location of the monopole 100' from the original location, and not 50' as stated earlier by AT&T. Mr. Donohue replied that it may be the case on the plan, but his construction and site acquisition staff had informed him that the new location was 50' from the original site selected. Mr. Nelligan asked if the new plan had been filed with the Board of Appeals. Mr. Donohue stated that it had not been filed. Mr. Ma asked if the original and revised sites were still technically viable for AT&T. Mr. Donohue replied that they were viable.

Mr. Ma asked Mr. Hunnicutt to address the new alternatives suggested today. Mr. Hunnicutt explained that even if the Tower Coordinator engineer had been at the meeting, without new RF maps from AT&T, they could not comment on what coverage might be obtained by Mr. Nelligan's suggested alternative. He added that based on his review of the RF maps showing PEPCO Pole R-57, that site was too far to the north and east to provide coverage much farther south than to Etchison. He concluded that although it was conjecture on his part, he supposed that if a shorter monopole was located closer to Laytonsville, there would still be a gap in coverage south of Etchison, which would otherwise be covered by the Barnhart monopole. He also noted that there are problems with locating one cell too close to another. He stated that could be a problem because AT&T already had antennas at the airpark water tank located just south of Laytonsville. Mr. Nelligan stated that perhaps two shorter monopoles could be used to cover the area south of Etchison.

Mr. Donohue replied that AT&T had worked hard to resolve the TTFCG's questions, and that today's meeting was scheduled just to answer the questions regarding relocating the monopole on the Barnhart property to better conceal the structure. He stated he had mentioned the Stanley property because it is AT&T's policy that if there are existing structures such as silos, water tanks, or transmission line facilities in a proposed area, they will use them. He stated that for the TTFCG to suggest that AT&T add more new monopoles goes beyond the TTFCG's authority. Mr. Nelligan stated he believed those additional options should be considered.

Ms. Lawton stated that the TTFCG's primary objective was to identify that there was a need for a new facility, and then they examine if there are co-location options available to the carriers. Jane King noted that the PEPCO transmission lines were fairly close to the Barnhart property, and asked what the minimum distance requirements were for finding an existing structure. Mr. Hunnicutt noted that one needed to look at where the transmission line towers were located, not the transmission lines. Ms. Lawton added that the TTFCG had met with the Tower Coordinator engineer and AT&T's engineers in closed session at the last meeting and had reviewed all the RF issues and the TTFCG had resolved all of their questions; consequently, this meeting was only to review relocating the monopole on the property. She stated that the TTFCG now had to act on those remaining issues since the Park and Planning Commission hearing was scheduled for October 11, and the Commission required a recommendation from the TTFCG before proceeding with the hearing.

Eric Carzon stated he was in favor of recommending the application because, from a governmental perspective, there is a public interest in placing cellular service in the community, and if there are community

objections to the aesthetics of the facility, those were issues that were more appropriately considered by the Park and Planning Commission and the Board of Appeals. He added that although one could consider other options for new monopoles or additional sites for antennas, there must be a limit to how many different options a carrier must consider. He noted that the role of the TTFCG was to review the carrier's application and the Tower Coordinator's evaluation and act on the information they have been provided to meet the role established for the TTFCG. He stated he did not believe it was appropriate to look at an endless array of options. He stated that the TTFCG encourages co-location and when it is demonstrated that there is a hole in service coverage, the TTFCG must act on the application, and the other issues must be taken up at the Park and Planning Commission. He stated that he believed that AT&T had fulfilled the requirement of looking at appropriate co-location options and he believed it was time for the group to take action on the application.

Mr. Van Aller agreed, stating that the County has also recently gone through an extensive review for siting new public safety radio system towers, and that all of the various design considerations have a cost implication; however, in the end the carrier must determine the option that best suits their needs. He agreed that he believed that the TTFCG had performed a complete review of this application, the carrier had done its part in responding to TTFCG questions. He stated that the residents certainly have the right to oppose this siting but that the Park and Planning Commission and the Board of Appeals are the appropriate place for their input.

Michael Ma stated that the Park and Planning Commission has been trying to establish a balance between meeting community interests as well as meeting the public need in reviewing telecommunications applications. He stated that the Park and Planning Commission wants to communicate to the carriers that they should try harder to come up with alternatives which minimize the adverse effect in the community but still enable them to deploy their facilities.

Ms. Lawton stated she would have liked to have had all of the residents at today's meeting in attendance at the last meeting when the RF issues were discussed in more detail. She stated that the TTFCG was satisfied with the RF issues and she believed it was appropriate for the group to take action on the application. She stated that any time there are existing structures in the vicinity of new siting requests, the TTFCG should investigate them, and, in this case, it had done so. She stated that this application clearly shows a hole in coverage and the determination of whether that constitutes a need for a new monopole is an issue for the Park and Planning Commission to address. She stated that she believed the TTFCG had done its job in its review of this application, and that the remaining issues were a matter for the Park and Planning Commission.

Jane Lawton agreed that the TTFCG should challenge the industry to do a more creative job in siting their facilities. She noted that many times the TTFCG's review of applications for new facilities had resulted in the application either being withdrawn or the antennas being placed on existing structures in lieu of construction of a new facility.

Bob Hunnicutt noted that the TTFCG had even expanded the realm of alternatives by negotiating with PEPCO to establish a master lease which would permit the carriers to attach antennas on existing PEPCO transmission line facilities.

Ms. Lawton explained that the County Council was in the process of reviewing the ordinance with particular regard for placement of new facilities in the up-county areas.

Michael Ma added that he believed that the suggestion of a tree monopole was a land use issue and more appropriate for the Park and Planning Commission. Ms. Lawton agreed that today that is true, but she noted that in the past, the Park and Planning Commission and the Board of Appeals were not as aware of the stealth siting options available.

Michael Ma stated that a community's perception of an acceptable siting differs from community to community. Mr. Nelligan stated that he believed that the citizens would feel more comfortable if the TTFCG recommended a camouflaged site in this case.

Mr. Van Aller asked if AT&T would discuss possible stealth applications for this monopole with the community. Mr. Donohue agreed to meet with them if they so desired.

Motion: Willem Van Aller moved that the revised plan for the siting of the monopole 100' from the original location be recommended, and that the carrier discuss possible opportunities for camouflage with the surrounding community representatives. Eric Carzon seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

The next meeting of the TTFCG is scheduled for Wednesday, October 10, 2001 at 2:00 p.m. in the 6th floor conference room of the COB.